



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
Milwaukee County
SCOTT WALKER • COUNTY EXECUTIVE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WALKER ANNOUNCES NEW HOUSING INITIATIVES FOR 2008

Two New Directors to head Housing, Behavioral Health Divisions

Milwaukee – Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker today announced a series of new housing initiatives that he will include in his 2008 Recommended Budget. These initiatives are designed to build off of the package of housing initiatives for persons with mental illness that the County Executive included in his 2007 Recommended Budget. Walker also appointed a Special Needs Housing Action Team with Mayor Tom Barrett in the fall of 2006, which submitted a report earlier this summer that contains several housing initiatives that are already in various stages of implementation.

The new initiatives in Walker's 2008 Recommended Budget include the following:

- **An appropriation of \$1 million in the Capital Improvements Budget for the construction of housing for individuals with mental illness served by the County's Behavioral Health Division (BHD).** This would build off the \$1 million included in the 2007 County Budget for the same purpose, of which approximately \$500,000 has so far been appropriated for two projects in Milwaukee's central city. Like the 2007 appropriation, the 2008 measure would be financed via a loan from the State Trust Fund Loan Program.
- **Creation of a new Housing Division in the County's Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).** The new Division would combine the Voucher and Home/Home Repair programs that are currently housed in the Economic and Community Development Division with the Special Needs Housing program housed in the Behavioral Health Division. The consolidation of these programs in a separate division within DHHS will reflect a new strategic emphasis for the County on prioritizing the use of Federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds to serve persons with mental illness and disabilities. It also reflects a conclusion reached by the Special Needs Housing Action Team that the use of HUD Section 8 vouchers for residents of new special needs housing projects will be critical to the long-term success of those projects.
- **An appropriation of \$55,000 for supportive services in the new United Christian Church/Cardinal Capital housing development at 25th and Center.** This development project was initiated by BHD's housing task force and is one of two that has been approved for funding from the 2007 appropriation for special needs housing. It is scheduled to be completed in mid-2008, and this appropriation will provide for supportive services for the 24 BHD residents who will reside there.

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(Housing Initiatives, Add 1)

- **An appropriation of \$50,000 for administrative support for the Continuum of Care,** the coalition of local agencies and governmental entities that is charged with applying for HUD Homeless Assistance dollars on an annual basis. This appropriation reflects a recommendation submitted by the Special Needs Housing Action Team.
- **An appropriation of \$25,000 to support the new Supportive Housing Development Committee** recommended by the Special Needs Housing Action Team.

Walker also announced today that Jim Hill, Administrator of the Behavioral Health Division since 2003, will head the new Housing Division (pending approval of its creation by the County Board). Hill will serve as Associate Director at DHHS until the new Housing Division is created. In addition to his experience at the county, Hill was Director of Finance and Administration for the City of Milwaukee's Department of City Development (which at the time included fiscal oversight of the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee).

"Jim Hill has the experience in housing and in programming that we need to increase the number of housing options for people with mental illness in our county," said Walker, "I am looking forward to him leading the new Housing Division."

Walker also announced that John Chianelli will be appointed as the new BHD Administrator. Chianelli has been the Director of the County Health Programs Division since 2004. He previously worked for 15 years as a clinician and senior administrator at BHD. Walker cited Chianelli's outstanding performance in administering and re-shaping the County's General Assistance Medical Program (GAMP) and Emergency Medical Services program, as well as his vast experience as an occupational therapist and administrator of BHD's Service Access to Independent Living program, as indicators of his ability to lead BHD.

"John Chianelli has the clinical experience and administrative creativity to lead the Behavioral Health Division into a new era," Walker said. "BHD has experienced an overwhelming surge in activity at its Psychiatric Crisis Service and inpatient units during the past several months, which has exacerbated the severe challenges it has always faced as the only entity in Milwaukee County that is caring for the needs of indigent, chronically mentally ill persons in this community. A series of initiatives I will soon be announcing in my 2008 Budget – combined with a potential move to a new state-of-the-art facility – will bring stability and success to BHD, and John Chianelli is just the right person to lead us there."

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